

	Portales Police Department	SOP #	201.03
		Date Revised:	
	Standard Operating Procedure & Policy	OPR. #	01.08
1700 N. Boston St. Portales NM, 88130	Canine Unit	Effective Date	
(575) 356-4404		Approval:	Pat Gallegos, Chief of Police

## I. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

To establish procedures and regulations governing the, training, use and administration of police service canine teams employed by the Portales Police Department. These teams will be referred to throughout this manual as "K9" teams. This Standard Operating Procedure shall define the authority and responsibility for their use.

## II. POLICY

- A. Utilization of properly trained police service, canines represent a highly cost effective and reliable asset to law enforcement personnel, by utilizing the canine's acute olfactory and hearing senses. The police service canine also provides a psychological deterrent by their presence at the scene of potentially conflict or disturbance.
- B. Areas of potential deployment for K9 teams may include, but are not limited to:
  - Building Searches
  - Open Area Searches
  - Evidence Searches / Article Recovery
  - Tracking or Trailing
  - Narcotics / Controlled Substances Detection
  - Back-Up for Violent / Potentially Violent Calls
  - Back-Up for Felony Arrest
  - Crowd Control and Disbursement
  - Pursuit / Apprehension at Vehicle and Foot Pursuits
  - Protection of Law Enforcement Personnel

## III. AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITY

- A. The Field Services Division is responsible for the general supervision of those K9 teams assigned to support patrol functions within the Division.
- B. A supervisor at the rank of Sergeant will be assigned as the K9 Unit supervisor and shall assume the responsibility of supervising and administering the day-to-day operations of the K9 Unit. The K9 Unit supervisor will report to the Field

Services Division Lieutenant.

C. K-9 Unit supervisor responsibilities are:

1. Making recommendations for officers wanting to enter the K-9 program
2. Maintaining and scheduling training programs that are consistent, beneficial, and well documented.
3. The K-9 unit supervisor is responsible for the evaluation and performance of the K-9 Unit.
4. Coordinating a work schedule for each K-9 team that meets the needs of the department.
5. Scheduling public appearances and demonstrations
6. Act as a liaison to the public regarding all K-9 information
7. Staying current on all K-9 related issues

D. K-9 Handlers responsibilities are:

1. Overall responsible for assigned police service canine in accordance with Departmental policy and procedure.
2. The K-9 handler has the authority to determine the lawfulness and appropriateness of any K-9 deployment and can authorize or deny any request for the K-9 to be utilized.
3. Respond to radio calls when and where the police service canine's presence will further field operational goals and objectives.
4. Maintain required standards of proficiency for their assigned canine through required training.
5. Care for and maintain assigned police service canine.
6. Provide medical care and treatment of their assigned canine.
7. Prepare and submit for his supervisor all appropriate reports and logs pertinent to their daily activities.
8. Immediately brief his supervisor of all incidences in which the K-9 is deployed as a use of force and complete all reports related to such an incident.
9. Maintain in proper working order all issued equipment for the canine.
10. Immediately brief his supervisor on all K-9 related issues.

11. In all instances when the canine enters or exits into any public building or area possibly occupied by persons, in an official or non-official capacity, the handler will announce clearly and loudly of the presence of the canine.

#### E. Police Canine Vehicles

1. The police department shall provide patrol vehicles dedicated for use by the canine teams. Each vehicle shall be equipped and marked as a regular patrol vehicle with additional lettering of "K-9" located on each side rear door. In addition, each canine vehicle shall be equipped with a canine platform, cage, remote control bail out door and heat control unit.
2. Arrestees shall not be transported in the canine vehicle unless alternative transportation is not available and immediate transport is essential.
3. Each Canine Handler is personally responsible for the cleaning of the vehicle and coordinating the regular maintenance with the city's fleet maintenance.

#### IV. K-9 TEAM DEPLOYMENT

##### A. A Police Canine may be deployed under the following circumstances:

1. For the protection and/or safety of the handler, the police service dog, other officers or persons,
2. To locate, apprehend or control suspects reasonably believed to be violent or dangerous,
3. To search for evidence, or other contraband,
4. To apprehend a criminal suspect when the canine handler reasonably believes that the severity of the crime warrants the application of the canine,
5. To locate and apprehend hidden suspects when it would be unsafe for officers to proceed into the area.

##### B. Prior to each canine deployment, the handler must objectively assess:

1. The severity of the crime at issue,
2. Whether, in the case of a search for a suspect, the suspect poses an immediate threat of harm,
3. Whether, in the case of a search for a suspect, the suspect is actively resisting arrest or attempting to evade arrest by flight.
4. In any instance, the handler will ensure that all department policy and procedure and case law regarding K-9 is adhered to, prior to any deployment.

5. The tactics and manner in which a police service dog is deployed shall be the decision of the handler. The responsibility and repercussions involved in such decisions will also be that of the handler.
6. Canines will not be deployed on subjects who are obviously unconscious, sleeping, or passively resisting except in situations where there is a reasonable belief that the person poses an immediate threat to officer, the public or themselves.

#### C. Apprehension

Police service dogs are trained to locate and control persons on command. When the police service dog is used in this manner, each handler will adhere to the following guidelines:

1. Before the dog is released, the handler must take reasonable steps to ensure the person to be apprehended is the suspect.
2. The handler will issue at a minimum two (2) loud verbal warnings to the suspect that the dog will be released. This warning will at a minimum include that the police dog is about to be released and include instructions to the suspect(s) regarding surrender.
3. The handler will not knowingly send a dog after a suspect being pursued by other officers.
4. When the police service dog locates the suspect, the dog will be allowed to control the suspect until the handler arrives to affect the arrest.
5. Once the suspect has been taken into custody the handler will give the dog commands to release it's control of the suspect.
6. The decision to release the suspect from the dog's control will be solely that of the handler and will be done only when it is deemed necessary and safe to do so by the handler.
7. If the handler is not able to affect the arrest alone, any cover officers will abide by instructions from the handler in order to affect the arrest safely.
8. In no event will the dog be allowed to bite or inflict injury beyond that reasonably necessary to affect the arrest.

#### D. Bite (On Duty/Off Duty)

1. In the event of a bite, on or off duty, the handler will immediately notify his direct supervisor
2. In every situation where a person has been bitten by the canine, the following

procedure will be followed:

- a. Immediately notify his direct supervisor and the on-duty Sergeant.
- b. Ask permission to look at the affected area. Take a color photo of the alleged bite area whether or not there is a visible injury.
- c. If there is no visible injury, ask the person if he wants medical attention and if so, immediately call for an ambulance to respond. If there is a visible injury, the ambulance will be called to respond and the person will be transported to the hospital for medical evaluation.
- d. The handler will complete an incident report on every bite in addition to a use of force report. Reports will be completed by the end of the duty day of the incident.
- e. The K-9 Unit Sergeant will review the incident and immediately brief his supervision through the chain of command to the Chief of Police.

#### E. Searches

1. The canines are capable of conducting searches for evidence, searches of buildings and open areas.
2. The building or perimeter should be secured by officers when possible.
3. In the event a K-9 unit is requested to conduct a search for evidence, it will be the determination of the handler as to whether or not the canine is utilized for a search.
4. Reasonable suspicion must exist to believe suspect(s) in vehicles are in possession of illegal controlled substances or related contraband.
5. The handler will assess the totality of circumstances involved in the incident prior to conducting a search of any kind to ensure the safety of the dog, handler, and any suspects or officers.
6. The handler maintains discretion as to whether the search is leashed or unleashed, depending on the conditions of the scene.
7. Building Search Procedures:
  - a. Upon arrival on scene the officer in charge of the scene will brief the handler of the situation.
  - b. The handler will assess the circumstances and consider the safety of a canine search for any possible suspects, the dog, and other officers prior to conducting the search.

- c. The handler will brief other officers on scene and notify them of their role during the search.
- d. Prior to deploying the dog the handler will give no less than two (2) clear and loud warnings, announcing to suspects of the imminent release of the police dog.
- e. Before the search of any residential building the handler will take reasonable steps to ensure the safety of any residents that might be present.
- f. It is the responsibility of other officers on scene to adhere to all instructions of the handler when the building searches are conducted.

8. Open Area Search Procedures:

- a. Upon arrival on scene the officer in charge of the scene will brief the handler and receive necessary information to determine the need of the search.
- b. The handler will assign and brief all other officers of their duties prior to the search.
- c. When conducting an open area search the handler must make every reasonable effort to remain in contact with the dog at all times.
- d. When the police dog locates a suspect(s) the police dog will control the suspect until the handler arrives.

9. Searches for Lost or Missing Persons:

- a. The decision to utilize the K-9 for lost or missing person shall be that of the handler.
- b. The handler must assess the safety of all persons involved with the search prior to deploying the dog in this manner.

F. Pursuit Procedures:

- 1. When an officer becomes involved in a felony pursuit, the K-9 team shall comply with the Departmental procedure regarding pursuits. Handlers will comply with Emergency Vehicle Operations Policy and Pursuit Policy at all times concerning the use of a dog to aid in the pursuit.
- 2. The handler will consider whether their involvement in a police pursuit as a primary pursuit unit is necessary based on the totality of factors involved in the specific incident maintaining safety of the dog as the primary concern.

#### G. Crowd Control

1. K-9 Teams will not be used for crowd control at peaceful, lawful demonstrations.
2. K-9 teams may be used as a measure of crowd control to protect life or property during a riot or other unauthorized gathering.
3. The K-9 shall be leashed at all times, unless no other means are available to protect an individual from serious injury.
4. The canine will not initiate any offensive action, unless to guard against an imminent loss of life or serious bodily injury

#### V. RESPONSIBILITIES OF OFFICERS (Other than K-9 Team)

##### A. Officer Conduct

1. Department sworn or non-sworn personnel will not tease or harass any K-9 unless asked to do so in a training environment.
2. Personnel will not pet or attempt to pet a Department K-9 without permission of the handler.
3. Personnel will not open or attempt to open a K-9 unit vehicle without permission of the handler.
4. Personnel will not feed or attempt to feed a K-9 without the permission of the handler.
5. Department personnel will follow directions of the handler when working in the close proximity of the K-9 team.
6. Department personnel will attend a two (2) hour K-9 Safety course prior to working in close proximity to the K-9 team.

#### VI. TRAINING AIDES/CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES PROCEDURE

##### A. Security provisions for Controlled Substances

1. Long Term Storage
  - a. Safe located in the K-9 Supervisor Office or,
  - b. Secure access area
2. Short Term Storage
  - a. Narc Safe – provided by the department to the handlers

- b. Locks may be placed on ammo boxes for secure transport and storage for use in training.
- c. Handlers are permitted to secure the training aides in the safe or locked ammo boxes inside their assigned police K-9 units for training use when needed. At all times the training aides must be secured and the vehicle secured when the handler is not utilizing them.

#### B. Record Keeping

1. Receipt of controlled substances by K-9 Unit.
2. Initial inventory by K-9 Unit Supervisor from authorized source.
  - a. Division Lieutenant will authorize sources.
  - b. To be recorded on controlled substance inventory sheet by K-9 Unit Supervisor and witnessed by one other K-9 Unit member.
  - c. Documents relating to the acquisition of training aids will be maintained by the K-9 Unit Supervisor and the officer.
3. Inventory will be done annually by K-9 Unit Supervisor and Division Lieutenant.

#### C. Check-out of Controlled Substances for Training

1. Controlled substances will be weighed at check-out and check-in. Weighing will be done by the K-9 Unit Supervisor and witnessed by the Officer returning the training aids.
2. The K-9 Unit Supervisor will check the controlled substances out, via the Capers records management system.
3. Individual members are responsible for the security of the controlled substances that are checked out to them.
4. Substances will be kept in a Narc Safe or lockable ammo boxes for use during training.

#### D. Loss Reporting

1. Due to the nature of K-9 training, the potential of loss due to damage exists. In the event that such an occurrence arises, it will be recorded on the check-out forms and a memo will be completed detailing the facts of the loss. This memo will be included with the inventory.
2. Losses will be reviewed by the K-9 Unit Supervisor and Lieutenant. Memos will be maintained by the K-9 Unit Supervisor.



#### E. Rotation of Training Aids

1. To minimize contamination by handling, controlled substances will be removed from inventory after (2) two years or when necessary. This timeline may be extended or shortened with the approval of the K-9 handlers and K-9 Unit Supervisor.
2. Removal/Destruction will be in accordance with the original source's policy and will be noted on the inventory documentation.
3. Documentation relating to the return or destruction of controlled substance training aids will be maintained by the K-9 Unit Supervisor.

#### VII. Qualifications and Training

- A. All K9 Unit personnel shall be required to attend and successfully complete a Basic canine Handler Training Program, consisting of at least 240 hours of documented training, prior to being placed in-service as a K9 team.
- B. K-9 handlers will be required to conduct a minimum of four (4) hours of weekly maintenance training in order to maintain a high level of proficiency in the areas the dog is capable of being deployed.
  1. This mandatory maintenance training will be documented in a weekly training log and approved by the K-9 handler and K-9 Unit Supervisor at the end of each week.
  2. The K-9 Unit Supervisor will maintain all training records for each K-9 handler and dog.
- C. K-9 handlers and their dogs will be required to attend yearly certification update training in the areas the dog is capable of being deployed.
- D. For K-9 training in open public areas, training signs will be posted visibly at all access areas to the training area indicating "POLICE K-9 TRAINING IN PROGRESS". If a person who is not involved in the training enters the training area, the training will be suspended until all non-essential persons have safely left the training area.
- E. If for any instance a K-9 and/or their handler has not met the performance standard stated in subsections A thru C, that K-9 and handler will be removed from active duty until such a time that the training is received.

#### VIII. Uniforms and Equipment

- A. Unless otherwise approved, Canine Handlers will wear the authorized and appropriate uniform.

- B. All handlers will be issued specialized equipment. An equipment list will be maintained by the Support Services Lieutenant. Each handler will be responsible for cleaning and maintaining their assigned equipment. If the equipment is broken or lost then the handler will be responsible for reporting this damage or loss to the K-9 supervisor as soon as possible.

#### IX. Canine Maintenance Compensation

- A. Canine Handlers will receive four hours of maintenance time per week. Maintenance hours will be compensated according to the rules of extra hours worked.
- B. Maintenance time is used for kennel maintenance, dog grooming, scent association drills and any other duties that might arise in dealing with the canines care.